



Bible Study
2014-2015

Heart of a Servant

The Gospel of Mark

LESSON 10

Have you ever had one of those mornings when you woke up and immediately recognized the familiar agony of illness? The normal smell of morning coffee is stifled by sniffles, and trying to remember where last year's Kleenex box is currently collecting dust is nearly impossible due to a dull throb in your head that seems to trickle down through every joint in your body. Many people make a beeline for the pharmacy to buy medications to get rid of the symptoms which had no permission to interrupt your life and schedule. A doctor will tell you that people usually purchase medications which list the most symptoms on the package, even if they don't have those symptoms. But the pain we feel is not because of the symptoms, but the virus or bacteria that has invaded our body and attacked our immune system.

So it is with the terminal disease of sin. Until a person comes to the Great Physician to be forgiven, cleansed, healed and set free from sin, the person (and those around them) will experience many different symptoms of the deadly disease. There will be infections in their relationships, wounds in their actions, and contagions in their speech. Ironically, our nation spends billions of dollars propagating it, despite its destruction.

In this chapter of Mark, Jesus not only begins to identify the symptoms of sin in a life, but He diagnoses the source that destroys relationships; relationships with others and with God. He also demonstrates that healing comes from Him and from His word being rightly applied. Even an effectual, powerful vaccine can be tainted and harmful if altered.

*"I would rather play with forked lightning,
or take in my hand living wires with their fiery current,
than speak a reckless word against any servant of Christ,
or idly repeat the slanderous darts which thousands of
Christians are hurling on others."*

~ A.B. Simpson

Read Mark 10:1-12

It would be easy to read the first verse and not notice something tender about the Lord. He has come to the time in His ministry where multitudes constantly followed Him. But it is the phrase "as He was accustomed" or in the habit of continually doing, He taught them.

1. Do you see the picture of a Shepherd Who faithfully fed hungry sheep whenever they would draw near? What did Job say about the Word of God in Job 23:12? After you write your answer, continue with a short prayer that the Lord would feed your soul and spirit throughout this lesson.

*“If sheep do not have the care of a shepherd, they will go the wrong way, unaware of the dangers at hand.
They have been known to nibble themselves right off the side of a mountain.
The welfare of sheep depends solely upon the care they get from their shepherd.
Therefore, the better the shepherd, the healthier the sheep.”*
~ Kay Arthur

2. If it wasn't a sin to add to the word of God, you could easily say, "As was the Pharisee's custom" at the beginning of verse 2. But their test to Jesus about the written law, was His opportunity to make straight the truths that they had made crooked (Isaiah 42:16).
 - a. Since the Pharisees were knowledgeable of God's word, they knew what it said about divorce. They thought they could use the word of God against Him (the Word of God). Yet there is a very important truth revealed to us in 2 Corinthians 3:6 when Paul was speaking of his ministry with the gospel. Fill in the blanks.

“God, Who also made us _____ as ministers of the new covenant, not of the _____ but of the Spirit; for the letter _____, But the Spirit gives _____.

- b. Without having the Holy Spirit of God in a person's heart, the words of God can be used as a harmful, destructive weapon, rather than an instructive, healing, life-giving source of salvation. What did Jesus say in Mark 10:5 was the **source** or cause that God allowed divorce?

- c. As in our introduction, a hard heart in a marriage will have many symptoms leading to divorce: adultery, abuse, and so on. In the book of Hosea, God divorced His people for spiritual adultery. Look up Jeremiah 3:8 and Isaiah 50:1a. What did God say to His people, the northern ten tribes of Israel?
- d. In the *Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible*, “hardness of heart” not only is a literal hardness, but “obstinacy, stubbornness and perverseness.” There are many “symptoms” that can surface in a person’s life that reveal this heart condition. For example, pornography has become rampant in our nation and is diagnosed by Jesus as a sin of adultery. Write out His words from Matthew 5:28.
- e. Another “symptom” that will destroy a marriage is found in Proverbs 13:10. Write out what the verse says and practically explain what this looks like between two people.
- f. Whether you are single, married, widowed or divorced, practically apply what Jesus has said about the hardness of heart to your own life. (There is a deeper scriptural study that can be done at http://www.thy-way.org/Bibles_Studies/Hardest_Heart.html). Seeing that a heart’s hardness will destroy a marriage and family, what has the Lord revealed to you? What have you learned?

Read Mark 10:13-16

3. As Jesus reiterates the truth about how marriage was originally created, He gives an injunction to men and women alike, "...what God has joined together, let no man separate." Sin divides and separates, but love unites and gathers together.
 - a. Now we have a circumstance involving children. As children are drawing near to Jesus, what do the disciples do in verse 13?

 - b. We may think the disciples' actions were ridiculous, but is it possible that our actions can sometimes come between a child and Jesus? Is it possible that their hearts are desiring to approach Him in prayer, or willing to seek Him at church, yet we hinder that with our own plans, schedules, or desires? Give one or two practical examples how this can happen.

 - c. Their Jesus is our Jesus. He is a loving Savior Who likes to touch and bless men, women and children. As you write out verse 16, prayerfully ask the Lord to mold you into a person that enables others to be touched by the Lord.

Read Mark 10:17-27

4. In these verses, we are given another “separator” of the heart from Jesus; the love of money. Notice that this young, wealthy ruler isn’t just a passive observer in the crowd, but he pursues the Lord and kneels before Him in honor.
 - a. His words in verse 17 shows he respects Jesus as a teacher of truth, not necessarily THE Truth. Why do you suppose the Lord answered his question with another question in verse 18?
 - b. When we read over verses 19-20, we see how the man has done what he believed to be right in God’s eyes since his youth. He has a sincere desire to have the eternal life that Jesus has spoken of, so he goes straight to Him to hear truth. Many children that are raised in Christian homes will eventually have to pursue Jesus themselves to have their own relationship with Him. And at the perfect time and in perfect ways, the Lord will always give the truth to a sincere heart as to its condition with Him. In this case, what did Jesus say was filling up His life that needed to be let go of? And what was his response (verse 22)?

*“There is nothing wrong with men possessing riches.
The wrong comes when riches possess men.”
~ Billy Graham*

- c. He was not upset because of needing to take up his cross, nor leaving home, but letting go of the temporary to gain the eternal. Matthew 6:21 says, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Your treasures are whatever is in your life that is valuable to you and holds great worth or importance. Treasures are revealed by what consumes much of your thought life and often times, what influences many of your actions. Write down some of the things that are treasures to you.

Read Mark 10:32-34

6. Sometimes it is easy to forget what kind of men the Lord chose as His disciples. We don't have physical descriptions but fisherman were not feeble or weak in strength. "Sons of thunder" does not give us a picture of passivity and mild temperaments. Yet, they were still human and despite being led by the Lord, they experience anxiety and fear at what lies before them.
 - a. So their Good Shepherd draws them close and gives them a detailed account about what is going to happen to Him: betrayal, injustice, condemnation, mocking, torturous scourging and death. Write down the last sentence in verse 34.
 - b. God's wrath against sin and the penalty that must be paid would be intense and painful for the disciples to watch. One can only skim the surface by speculating about the horror that Jesus was soon called to endure. But just as He faithfully warned them of what was coming, He faithfully promised what would come afterward. Write out the wonderful words of Psalm 30:5.
 - c. Maybe you have been through some painful and difficult times, when weeping and sorrow seemed to fill your days. In order to comfort one another with the comfort we have received (2 Corinthians 1:4), how did Jesus turn your sorrow into joy?
 - d. *Reflective Observation*: Notice also that the men God chose to share His love with the world completely ignored Jesus' painful revelation of His future. Not intending to be irreverent nor lower the significance, let's think of a MUCH less painful application. How do you think you might feel if you were facing a terminal illness and the doctor's prognosis was horrifying to imagine? As you gather your very closest friends and family, you recount to them the pain, suffering and near torture of mind and body you will be enduring soon. Yet, not one of them responds with compassion, understanding, or even reflects on your words to show they were listening. Instead, they begin to argue over your possessions and who is entitled to have them!

Now think about the reality of Jesus' words to His closest friends. Be amazed at the kind of love Jesus has that He would not even rebuke them for their selfishness and calloused ambition. Write one sentence of thanksgiving in response.

8. This request by James and John surfaces another principle that makes the kingdom of God unique from the world's kingdoms. In Mark 10:42, Jesus mentions how the Gentiles "lord" over people. This word means to "rule, govern, exercise supreme power and authority, masters."
- a. In contrast, the greater the degree one desires power and authority to govern or rule over people, the greater should be what kind of response and actions from us (verses 43-44)?

 - b. Servant and slave are "diakonos" and "duolos" in the Greek. "Diakonos" is like an assistant to another or one who gives service to another. What does Hebrews 3:5 say about Moses in this role?

 - c. "Duolos" is a different term from servant. This means slave. One who has no rights at all. Slaves possessed no personal property and lived in the state of being completely controlled by another. How did Jesus demonstrate He was both servant and slave according to His word in Mark 10:45?
9. There are some cults that exist today which have taken these verses (combined with others) and twisted them according to their own desires. The "Shepherding Doctrine" teaches people to be completely subservient to those they believe God has placed in authority over them. They give over their possessions and surrender their rights to make decisions over their own lives in the name of the Lord. Jesus labeled this practice as wicked and very similar to the "deeds of the Nicolaitans" in scripture.
- a. How does God say He feels about them in Revelation 2:6?

 - b. What are the Lord's strong instructions to us from 2 John 1:9-10

- c. In context, the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, came to serve others in order to assist them in their relationship with God. He also became a slave and surrendered His own life and will to be led by God the Father and His purposes. THIS is the correct application of our text. Our service and surrendered life are to God the Father, in Jesus the Son, by the power of His indwelling Spirit, and as we serve God, we also serve others. How can you practically apply this truth to your day-to-day roles? Whether it be at work, school, in ministry, as a wife, mother, daughter, or friend.

*“A servant of God has but one Master.
It ill becomes the servant to seek to be rich, and great, and honored
in that world where his Lord was poor, and mean, and despised.”
~ George Mueller*

Read Mark 10:46-52

10. Before asking some reflective questions, be careful not to miss the details of this story that may be familiar to you. Picture the scene in your mind’s eye and imagine the sounds of thousands following Jesus. And watching this vast crowd leave the city of Jericho, you see a beggar sitting in the road.
- a. What does he cry out to Jesus specifically in verses 47-48?

b. Other people tried to stop this poor beggar from calling out to the Lord. Maybe you have experienced a time when others tried to discourage you from seeking the Lord. Not only before you became a Christian, but it can be afterwards as well. Reflect briefly on this if it has happened to you.

c. No one could stop Bartimaeus though. Despite the noise and clamor of thousands, the cry of one beggar stopped Jesus in His tracks. Write out what each verse says about the mercy of our Lord.

Psalm 86:15 -

Psalm 103:8 -

Daniel 9:9 -

11. In Mark 10:50, the man did three things: he removed his beggarly garments, rose up to Jesus' call, then came to Jesus himself. These are practical for us as well. Hebrews 12:1 says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses (like the multitude), let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us (any filthy garments)..."

a. Is there something you are carrying that is as the beggar's cloak rather than a robe of righteousness He has provided? Read Zechariah 3:1-5 and record in your own words (reflectively and prayerfully) what happened to Joshua the high priest.

- b. Jesus asked Bartimaeus (Mark 10:51) the exact same question He had asked James and John in verse 36. Sight was all the beggar wanted. After Jesus answers his prayer, what did Bartimaeus do?

- c. There are times in our lives where we may feel as though we are blind. We cannot see the Lord working, or the path we are to walk seems hidden to us, or we feel blind in our understanding of life's circumstances. But as Bartimaeus did, we can call upon the name of the Lord and count on His mercy to meet us. Jesus may give us sight immediately, He may delay for a set time of revelation, or we may not gain insight but need to trust. Recall a verse or promise from the scriptures that has encouraged you and share with others if you are a part of a group.

12. End your lesson by thinking about the principles the Lord laid out concerning the Kingdom of God. Remember what Jesus said concerning a heart that has become hard and reflect on other topics He spoke to you about in your lesson. What has been the greatest challenge to your heart, your walk or life? Write out a response in prayer by asking the Lord to help you with this.